

Professional Learning Meeting Agenda – 10/27

- MEVA Mission and Vision Review.
- Draft SY-2024/2025 Annual Monitoring Report – quick review.
- Our focus.
- Win over the student initiative.
- State Testing Update – Stephanie Emery.
- Reminders – Dr. Christina O’Grady.
- Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Update – Dr. Christina O’Grady.
- Book Study – Dr. Christina O’Grady.
- Other and next Professional Learning (PL) Meeting on Monday, November 17th, 3:00 pm. (3:00 pm, November 3rd and 10th are faculty work times for catch up, curriculum mapping, grading, etc.)

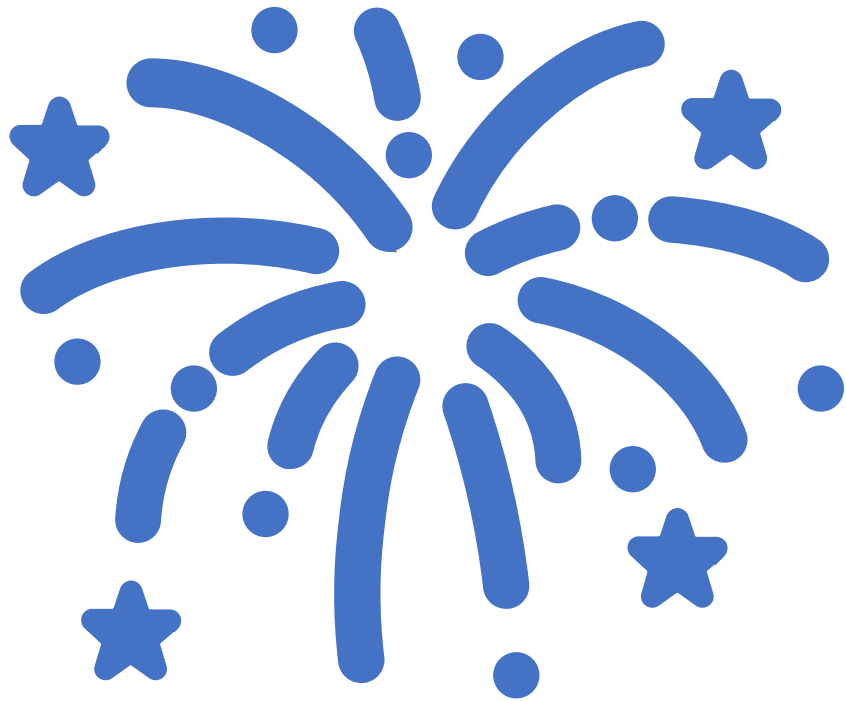
MEVA Mission and Vision

School Mission:

Maine Virtual Academy's (MEVA) mission is to develop **each** student's full potential with learner-centered instruction, research-based curriculum and educational tools and resources to provide a high-quality learning experience for grade 7-12 students who are in need of **alternative educational options**. MEVA will develop an **Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)** with specific learning goals to meet each student's needs. MEVA's **rigorous** curriculum is **aligned** to the eight Maine content areas, the **Maine Learning Results, the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards**.

School Vision:

MEVA will be a leading 21st century public charter school in Maine and will improve student learning outcomes through **individualized instruction**, as evidenced by **student academic proficiency, student academic growth, post-secondary readiness, and the demonstration of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and self-direction**. MEVA will empower students to acquire the academic and life skills needed to succeed in **post-secondary education and career opportunities**. Our graduates will be **prepared** for college or other postsecondary career training opportunities.



Congratulations, everyone, for strong SY-2024/2025 results!

SY-2024/2025 Annual Monitoring Report – quick review



Our focus

- Please focus on communicating your rigorous expectations, within your course shells and live sessions.
- Please focus on quality implementation of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and curriculum maps.
- Please encourage your students to complete work in live sessions and attend daily Help Desk.
- Recommend your struggling students for team meetings.

Win Over the Student!

Thoughtful and consistent communication is the foundation on building successful rapport with our families and students.

Immediate intervention has been recognized as the most effective method in student retention. Every role within the school plays an important part in this effort.

Without our Students there would be no MEVA!

Win Over & Rapport

- **Win Over**: is a proactive approach/mindset. Win “back” is more reactive and is also needed in some cases, like in progress withdrawals as an example.
- **Rapport Definition**:
 - The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines Rapport as; *a friendly, harmonious relationship especially: a relationship characterized by agreement, mutual understanding, or empathy that makes communication possible or easy.*
- **Google Dictionary - Examples of Further Meaning**;
 - 1. Rapport is a good sense of understanding and trust.
 - 2. A close and harmonious relationship in which the people or groups concerned understand each other's feelings or ideas and communicate well. Example, *"she was able to establish a good rapport with the children"*

Communication

- In ALL Cases;
 - Communication should always exhibit compassion, empathy and kindness.
 - Be an effective communicator, timely and responsive.
 - Exhibit a willingness to help and serve our families well.
 - Never forget to share the vast opportunities we have at MEVA to support our students!

Withdrawal Mitigation Process

- **Ask why?** - Use phrases like, “*Before* you withdraw, tell me about your reason. There may be something we can do for you.”
- **Listen for keywords;** lack of support, socialization, motivation challenges, tech or navigation challenges and so forth.
- **As you listen, empathize** - Understand their position and their feelings. Many times, families or students have been thinking about withdrawal for a while.
- **Advocate for MEVA’s programs** - Share information on our clubs, self-paced options, and student support opportunities. See if they are willing to have a team meeting to talk over work credit options, early college opportunities, and so much more. Some students may qualify for early graduation.
- **Document, document, document** - your mitigation efforts in contact logs within Infinite Campus, then *submit a “Rapid Response” form below*. Familiarize yourself with the form selections to be aware of the kinds of barriers that lead to withdrawals.
- **Link to the form:** [24-25 Rapid Response \(Intervention\) Form](#)

MTY Participation as of 10/27/25

MTY OVERALL	7th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	Grand Total
Completed	19	62	82	163
OPT OUT	1	3	5	9
Travel - Completed	4	3	19	26
Travel - Not Tested	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	24	68	106	198
Tested	23/24	65/68	101/106	189/198
Participation %	95.83%	95.58%	95.28%	95.45%

THANK YOU ALL! CHEERS, TO ANOTHER EXCELLENT TESTING SEASON!



We Need Your Feedback!

If you haven't done so already, please complete the
[Proctor Survey](#)

(ANY staff member can complete this form if you have helped in some way.)

This information helps Coordinators greatly.



Curriculum Maps

- Oceanography - feedback given on 10/16, final review by committee on 11/4, board approval 11/18 board meeting
- Early/Late Medieval History - feedback sent on 10/17, final review by committee on 11/4, board approval 11/18 board meeting

Next Up:

- Maine History - first review by committee on 11/4
- MS Self-Paced Physical Education - first review by committee on 11/4

FOX Time Protocol

Staff Scheduling Reminder

FOX Time is Required

All students must attend FOX Time sessions

- Consistent messaging to students is critical
- Our communication reflects program priorities
- Clear expectations lead to better participation

Before Scheduling Any Help Session

✓ **Verify the time does not conflict with student's FOX Time**

This includes ALL help sessions and HelpDesk appointments

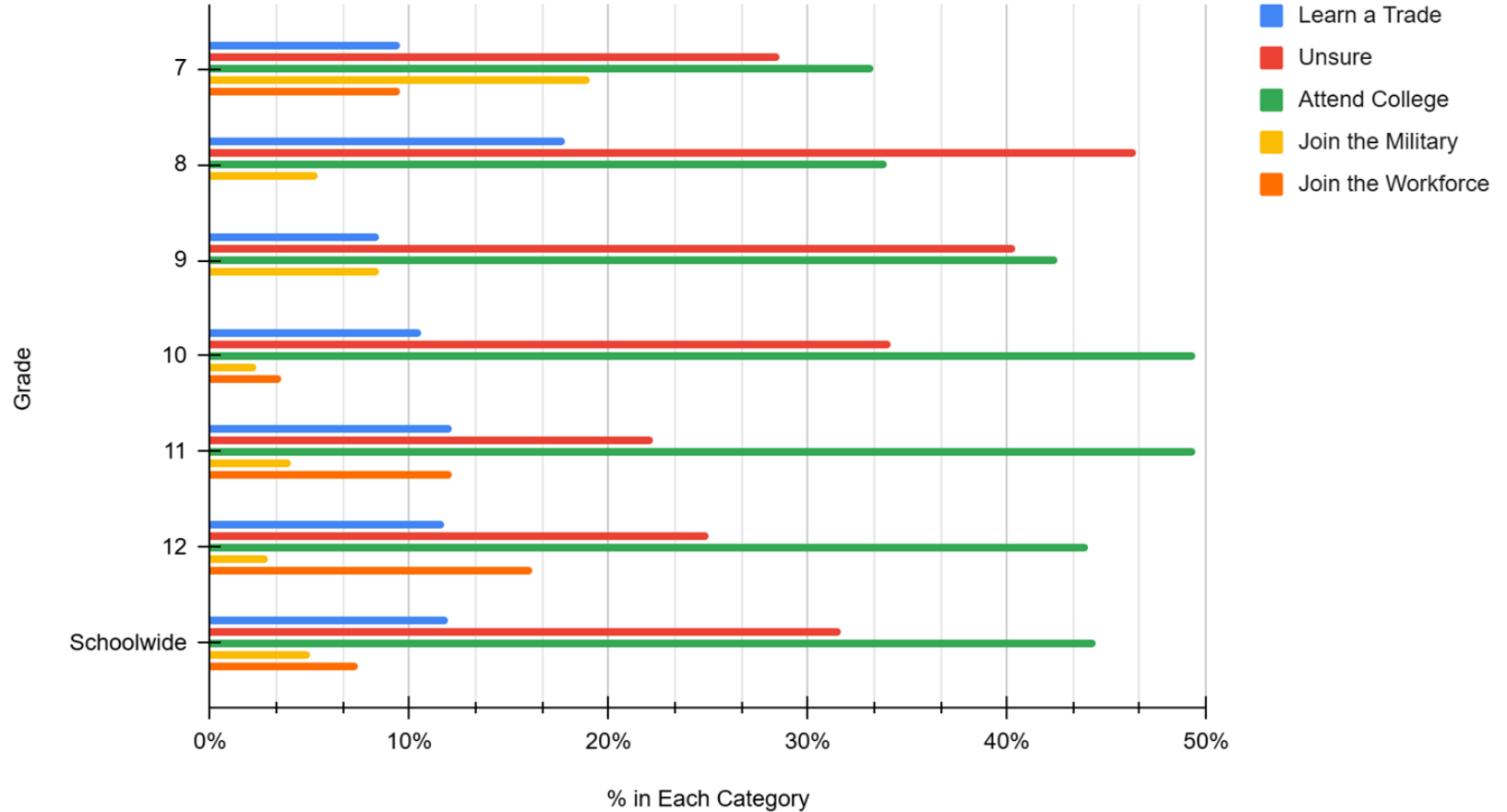
Other

- Other topics and/or questions?
- Next Professional Learning (PL) Meeting on **Monday, November 17th, 3:00 pm.** (3:00 pm, November 3rd and 10th are faculty work times for catch up, curriculum mapping, grading, etc.)
- Veterans Day is on **Tuesday, November 11th** and **Thanksgiving Break is November 26th, 27th, and 28th.** Please cancel your live sessions.
- MEVA virtual high school graduation on **Friday, June 5th at 2:00 pm.** MEVA virtual eighth grade recognition ceremony on **Friday, June 12th at 11:00 am.**
- Looking ahead, the Last Day of School is **June 12th.**
- PL Meeting Materials are posted at: <https://www.mainevirtualacademy.org/essaesserlaulresources/meva-professional-learning-pl-meeting-materials>
- Thank you for all that you do to support your colleagues, your students, and their families.

ILP Update

	% Completed
7th Grade (n = 24)	88%
8th Grade (n = 69)	84%
9th Grade (n = 56)	84%
10th Grade (n = 106)	80%
11th Grade (n = 123)	80%
12th Grade (n = 114)	60%
Schoolwide (n = 492)	77%

Postsecondary Goals



Recognize Distortions of Dignity

Uncovering normalized practices that diminish human worth

Session Overview

This session builds on our understanding of dignity to help us identify normalized practices, policies, and attitudes that inadvertently diminish human worth in educational systems.

What You'll Learn:

- Define dignity distortions and understand why they persist
- Identify five common types of dignity distortions in schools
- Apply critical questions to recognize distortions in your context
- Distinguish between individual and systemic approaches to transformation
- Design action plans to address dignity distortions

Estimate time: 25-30 minutes

Content Notice: This session involves critical examination of practices that may feel familiar or comfortable. Recognizing dignity distortions can be uncomfortable, especially when we realize we've participated in them. Remember: awareness without blame is the goal. Give yourself grace as you learn.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1	Define dignity distortions and explain why they often remain invisible within educational systems
2	Identify and describe five common types of dignity distortions with specific examples from educational practice
3	Apply five critical questions to examine practices, policies, and attitudes for potential dignity distortions
4	Distinguish between individual and systemic approaches to recognizing and transforming dignity distortions
5	Design an action plan to investigate dignity distortions in your own educational context

Reflection: Your Prior Learning

Share Your Experience

Which task did you choose from the last session? How did it go? What did you learn?

Reflection Prompts (choose what resonates):

- What patterns or themes emerged in your exploration?
- What surprised you or challenged your assumptions?
- How did the work help you see dignity differently?
- What questions arose that you want to explore further?

Sharing Options:

- Written reflection in journal
- Nearpod (next slide)
- Private chat
- Public chat
- Mic

If you didn't complete the prior assignment, reflect on a time you recognized (or failed to recognize) a practice that might have diminished someone's dignity.



Open Ended Question

Ready? Enter your answer here

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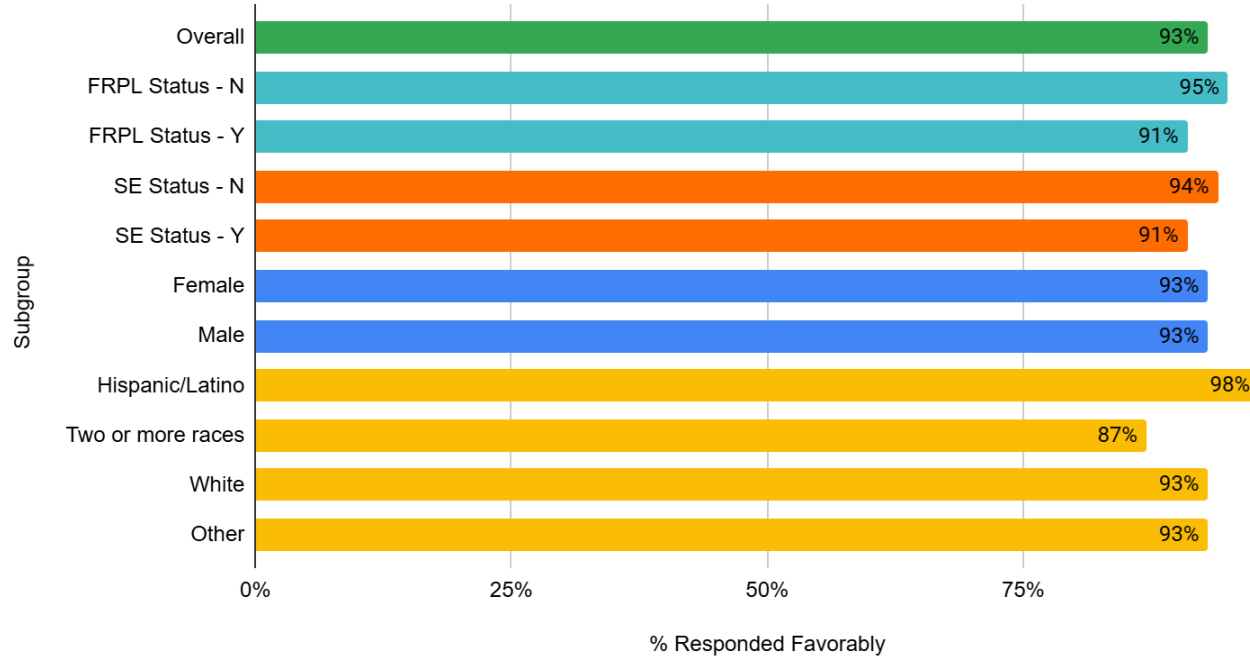
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School Safety

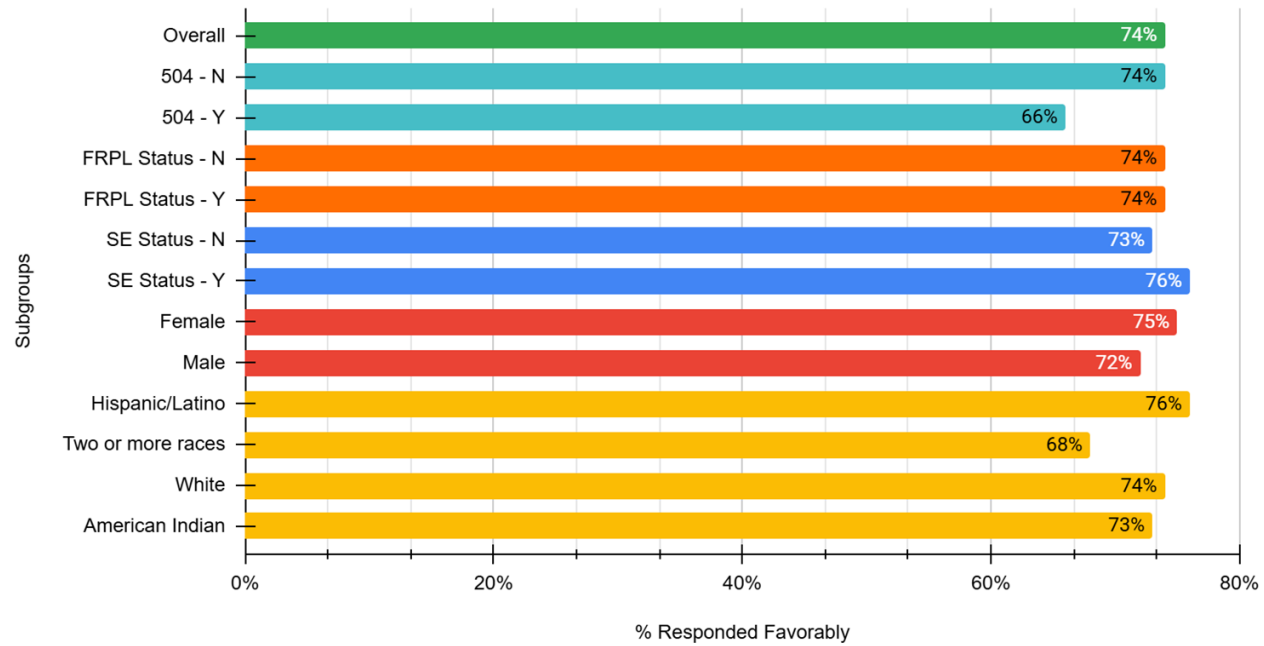
Subgroup Data



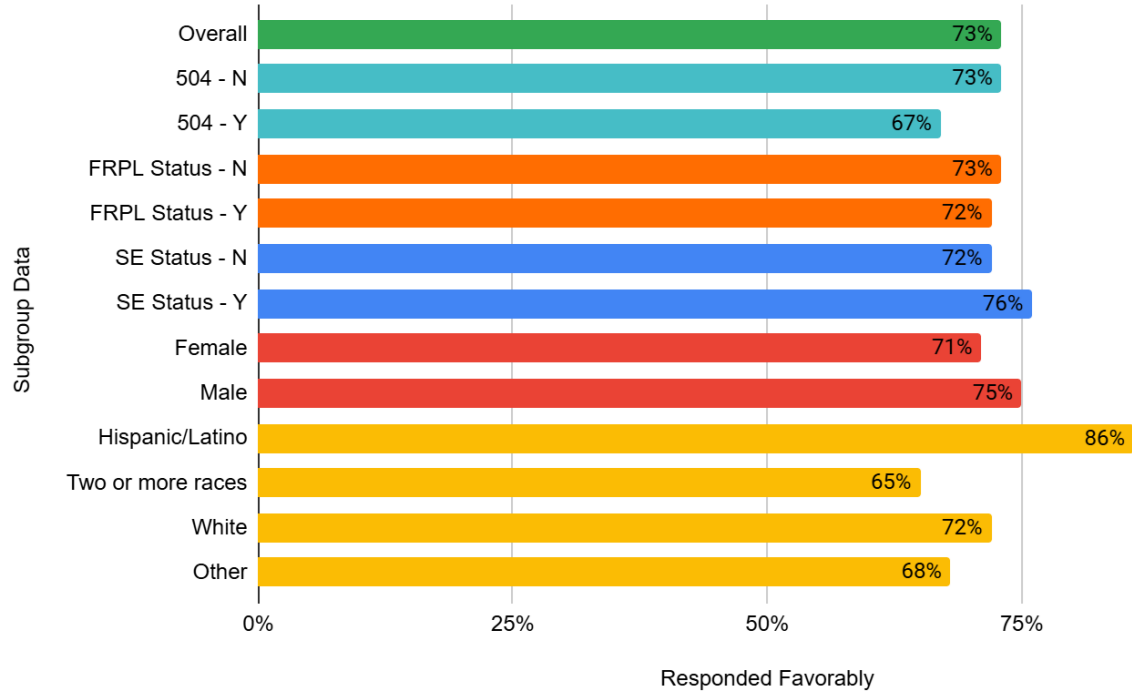
Spring Panorama Subgroup Data

School Climate: Perceptions of Social and Learning Climates

Subgroup Data

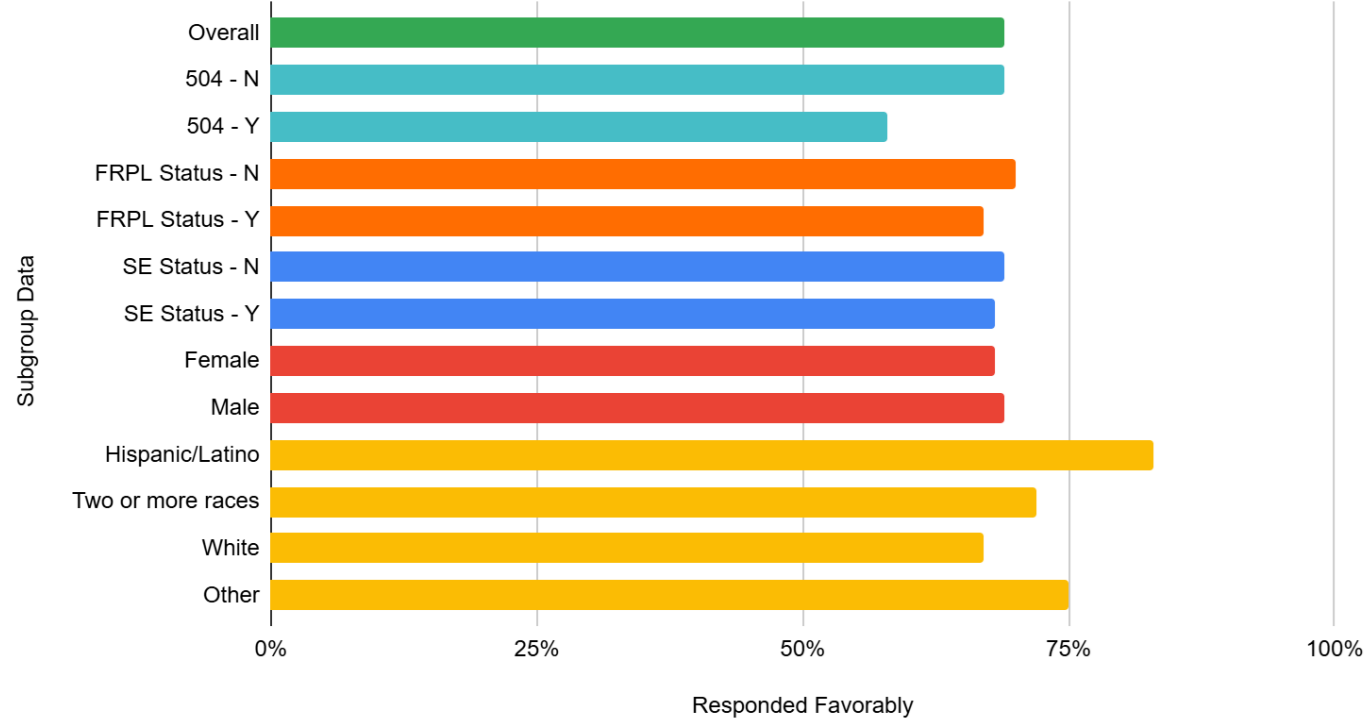


Teacher-Student Relationships



Spring Panorama Subgroup Data

School Rigorous Expectations



Policy Review: “Win Over” the Student

Deficit Thinking

Present but subtle: The framing of “Win Over” suggests students/families are obstacles to be conquered rather than partners to be engage. Phrases like “motivation challenges” risk pathologizing students rather than examining systemic barriers. The withdrawal mitigation focus is on *convincing* families to stay rather than genuinely addressing whether the program meets their needs.

Microaggressions

Paternalistic language: “Win Over the Student” treats families as subjects to be managed

Deficit framing: Keywords to “listen for” include “lack of support, socialization, motivation challenges” - placing problems within families rather than examining institutional failures

Transactional relationship: The focus is on *retention* (institutional need) rather than *student thriving* (student need)

“Without our Students there would be no MEVA”: While attempting positivity, this reveals the school’s self-interest rather than student-centered values

Policy Review: “Win Over” the Student Recommendations

1. Reframe from “Win Over” to “Partner With”
2. Add exit interviews that genuinely listen and improve programming
3. Honor family choice: Acknowledge that sometimes leaving is the dignified option
4. Examine institutional barriers: What about MEVA’s structure creates withdrawal desire?
5. Cultural responsiveness training: Build genuine competence, not just “compassion”
6. Student voice: Include student perspectives in policy development
7. Accountability measures: Track whether the school is meeting *student needs*, not just retention targets

Bottom line: This policy contains dignity-affirming *elements* (empathy, communication) but embeds them within a dignity-distorting *framework* (retention-focused, deficit-oriented, paternalistic). True dignity would center student flourishing over institutional survival.

Key Terms

Dignity Distortions

Normalized practices, policies, and attitudes in systems that diminish or deny the inherent dignity of individuals or groups. These distortions become “just the way things are” and go unquestioned.

Deficit Thinking

An orientation that views students and families through a lens of what they lack rather than recognizing and building on their strengths, knowledge, and resources. This mindset attributes challenges to perceived deficiencies in students/families rather than examining systemic barriers.

Cultural Humility

An ongoing process of self-reflection and self-critique that acknowledges power imbalances and commits to developing mutually respectful partnerships. It involves recognizing that your own cultural perspective is not universal and actively learning from others’ experiences.

Microaggressions

Brief, commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities (whether intentional or unintentional) that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages about someone’s identity. Individual incidents may seem small, but they accumulate into significant psychological harm.

Understanding Dignity Distortions

Core Concept: Dignity distortions are normalized practices that diminish

The Challenge

These distortions are often invisible to those within the system because:

- They're embedded in routine practices
- They reflect dominant cultural norms
- Everyone around us does them
- We learned them in our own education
- They feel “normal” or “professional”
- Questioning them feels disloyal

The Impact

Even with good intentions, distortions:

- Create barriers to authentic belonging
- Perpetuate systemic inequities
- Communicate “you don’t fully belong here”
- Force conformity to dominant norms
- Drain energy students need for learning
- Compound across multiple incidents

Example: A teacher genuinely believes all students can succeed but implements a rigid bell curve for grading, assuming only some students can earn high marks.. The grading policy (distortion) contradicts the stated belief and limits opportunities based on an assumption of scarcity rather than honoring each student’s inherent potential.



Collaborate Board

^ Instructions

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Five Common Dignity Distortions (Part 1)

Deficit Thinking

What it is: Viewing students and families through a lens of what they lack rather than what they bring. This perspective attributes struggles to perceived deficiencies in students/families rather than examining systemic barriers or building on existing strengths.

Looks like:

- “These students don’t have books at home” vs. “These students have rich oral storytelling traditions”
- “Parents don’t care about education” vs. “Parents work multiple jobs to provide and may need flexible meeting times”
- “They’re behind” vs. “They’re starting from different prior experiences”
- Remediation focus instead of acceleration and enrichment

Cultural Dismissal

What it is: Devaluing home languages, traditions, cultural practices, and lived experiences that differ from dominant cultural norms. This treats students’ cultures as obstacles to overcome rather than assets to honor and integrate.

Looks like:

- Discouraging or prohibiting students from speaking home languages
- “English only” policies that don’t recognize bilingualism as an asset
- Curriculum that only reflects dominant culture perspectives
- Treating cultural celebrations as “exotic” rather than normative
- Dress codes that ban cultural hair styles, head coverings, or clothing

Five Common Dignity Distortions (Part 2)

Punitive Discipline

What it is: Discipline systems designed to shame, exclude, or punish rather than teach, repair relationships, and address root causes. These approaches remove students from learning and community without building skills or understanding.

Looks like:

- Zero-tolerance policies with automatic suspension/expulsion
- Public shaming or humiliation as consequences
- Suspension as first response instead of understanding context
- Disproportionate discipline for students of color or students with disabilities
- No process for repair, reconciliation, or skill-building

Tracking Systems

What it is: Rigid ability grouping that limits opportunities based on perceived potential, often determined early and rarely changed. These systems frequently reinforce existing inequities rather than providing appropriate challenge and support for all.

Looks like:

- Permanent “low,” “medium,” and “high” groups with different curriculum quality
- Advanced courses with gatekeeping prerequisites vs. open enrollment
- Students rarely moving between tracks regardless of growth
- Lower tracks receiving less experienced teachers or fewer resources
- Tracking decisions based on subjective teacher recommendations vs. demonstrated ability

Five Common Dignity Distortions (Part 3)

Microaggressions

What it is: Brief, commonplace daily indignities that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages about someone's identity. Individual incidents may seem small or unintentional, but they accumulate into significant psychological harm and drain energy needed for learning.

Looks like:

- Consistently mispronouncing student names without effort to learn correct pronunciation
- Assuming a student of color is in the wrong class or "lost"
- Touching Black students' hair without permission
- Expressing surprise at a student's intelligence based on their background
- Asking students to speak for their entire racial/cultural group
- "Where are you really from?" questions that position students as perpetual foreigners
- Complimenting students for being "articulate" in ways that reveal low expectations

Important Context: Recognizing these distortions doesn't mean you're a "bad" educator if you've engaged in them. These are systemic patterns we've all absorbed. Awareness without self-blame is the goal - we can't change what we can't see. Recognizing distortions is the first step toward more dignified practices.

Collaborative Exploration

Activity: Identify Distortions in Your Context

Work individually, with a partner, or in a small group to brainstorm examples of dignity distortions you've observed in educational settings. Use the categories we've discussed or identify new ones.

Guiding Prompts:

- Think of a practice that feels “normal” but might diminish dignity
- Consider which students are most impacted by this practice
- Reflect on why this practice persists - what makes it invisible?
- Imagine how students might experience this differently than adults

Documentation Options:

- Use the Nearpod Collaborate Board (next slide)
- Private chat
- Public chat
- Microphone use

Remember: The goal is recognition and awareness, not judgment. These distortions exist in systems, not just individuals.



Collaborate Board

^ Instructions

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Five Critical Questions for Recognition

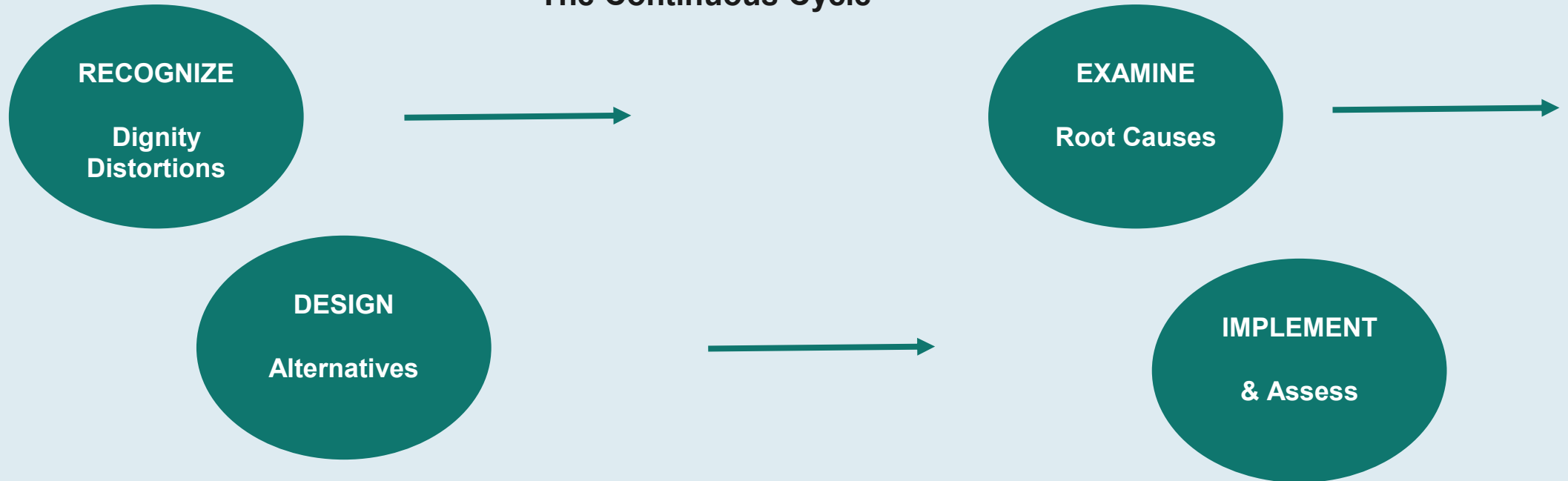
Use these questions to examine practices, policies, and attitudes for potential dignity distortions:

1	Does this practice affirm the inherent worth of ALL students? Consider: Does it work equally well for students across different identities, backgrounds, and learning needs? Or does it advantage some while marginalizing others?
2	Are we addressing symptoms or root causes? Consider: Does this practice fix surface issues while leaving underlying systems intact? Are we treating the “problem” as residing in students rather than examining structures?
3	Whose voices are missing from our decision-making? Consider: Who designed this practice? Whose experiences and perspectives shaped it? Who has been left out of the conversation?
4	What assumptions are we making about students and families? Consider: What beliefs about capability, culture, family structure, or values are built into this practice? Are we assuming deficit or recognizing assets?
5	How might this look different from a student’s perspective? Consider: If I were a student experiencing this practice, how would it feel? Would it communicate that I belong here? What would it tell me about my worth?

Remember: The goal isn’t to assign blame, but to develop awareness that leads to more dignified practices. Asking these questions is an act of courage and commitment to all students.

From Recognition to Transformation

The Continuous Cycle



This is an ongoing process, not a one-time event. Each cycle deepens your awareness and strengthens dignified practices.

Example in Action: A teacher recognizes that their classroom library primarily features books about white, middle-class families (RECOGNIZE). They examine why these books were selected and notice they reflect their own childhood reading (EXAMINE). They research diverse authors and involve students in book selection (DESIGN). They acquire new books and observe student engagement with texts that reflect their experiences (IMPLEMENT & ASSESS). They continue this cycle, always asking “whose stories are still missing?”

Two Levels of Transformation

Recognizing dignity distortions requires work at both individual and systemic levels. Both are essential - neither alone is sufficient.

Individual Level	Systemic Level
<p data-bbox="96 511 1294 554">Personal awareness and action within your sphere of influence:</p> <ul data-bbox="132 616 1304 1116" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="132 616 1304 711">• Examine personal biases: Notice automatic assumptions you make about students based on identity markers<li data-bbox="132 716 1304 811">• Question routine practices: Ask “why do we do it this way?” even for familiar procedures<li data-bbox="132 816 1304 911">• Seek diverse perspectives: Actively learn from those with different experiences and identities<li data-bbox="132 916 1304 1011">• Practice cultural humility: Recognize your cultural lens isn’t universal; stay open to learning<li data-bbox="132 1016 1304 1116">• Change daily interactions: Shift language, expectations, and practices in your immediate context	<p data-bbox="1355 511 2288 605">Organizational change in policies, structures, and collective practices:</p> <ul data-bbox="1391 668 2425 1268" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1391 668 2425 811">• Review policies and procedures: Examine handbooks, discipline codes, tracking systems through dignity lens<li data-bbox="1391 816 2425 911">• Analyze data patterns: Disaggregate outcomes by race, disability, language to identify disparities<li data-bbox="1391 916 2425 1059">• Include diverse voices in leadership: Ensure decision-making includes those most impacted by policies<li data-bbox="1391 1065 2425 1159">• Create accountability structures: Establish systems to monitor and address dignity distortions<li data-bbox="1391 1165 2425 1268">• Allocate resources equitably: Direct funding and support toward dismantling barriers

Application Activities: Choose Your Path

Select at least one activity to deepen your practice of recognizing dignity distortions. Choose the approach that best fits your learning style, context, and readiness.

Option 1: Practice Analysis

Time: 45-60 minutes

Choose 3 common practices in your classroom or school. Apply all five dignity lens questions to each practice. Document findings in a reflection journal. Identify at least 1 potential dignity distortion and brainstorm one alternative approach.

Option 2: Student Voice Inquiry

Time: 30 minutes + conversation

Talk with 5-10 students about their school experiences. Ask: "When do you feel most valued here? When do you feel like you don't fully belong?" Listen for moments when dignity was honored or diminished. Record insights without judgment.

Option 3: Policy Audit

Time: 60-90 minutes

Review your school's discipline policy, grading policy, or dress code through the dignity lens. For each section, ask: Does this affirm inherent worth? Whose voices shaped this? What assumptions does it make? Document specific concerns and propose dignity-affirming revisions.

Option 4: Data Deep Dive

Time: 60-90 minutes

Examine discipline, attendance, or achievement data disaggregated by race, disability, gender, language status. Where are disparities? What distortions might these patterns reveal? What systemic changes could address root causes rather than symptoms?

Option 5: Observation Protocol

Time: 45 minutes

Observe interactions in your school for 30-45 minutes, documenting examples of dignity-affirming and dignity-distorting practices. Notice patterns: Which students consistently receive dignified treatment? Which don't? What makes certain distortions invisible?

Option 6: Collaborative Inquiry

Time: 60 minutes

Partner with a trusted colleague. Each observe the other's practice or co-examine a shared policy. Use the five critical questions together. Provide each other with compassionate feedback focused on recognizing distortions, not assigning blame.

Key Takeaways

Bottom Line Up Front: Dignity distortions are normalized practices that diminish human worth. They persist because they're invisible - embedded in routines we've inherited and never questioned. Recognition is the essential first step toward transformation, requiring work at both individual and systemic levels.

Essential Principles:

- 1 Distortions are normalized and invisible:** They persist because they've become "just the way things are." They feel normal because everyone around us does them and we learned them in our own education.
- 2 Five common types exist in schools:** Deficit thinking, cultural dismissal, punitive discipline, tracking systems, and microaggressions all diminish dignity in different but interconnected ways.
- 3 Critical questions reveal distortions:** Ask: Does this affirm inherent worth? Are we addressing symptoms or root causes? Whose voices are missing? What assumptions are embedded? How might students experience this differently?
- 4 Recognition is continuous, not one-time:** The cycle of recognize → examine → design → implement → assess repeats endlessly as we deepen awareness and strengthen practices.
- 5 Both individual and systemic work are essential:** Personal awareness without structural change leaves systems intact. Policy changes without individual commitment lack authentic implementation. Both levels must happen together.

SY2025/2026 Updated Assessment Calendar

Assessment Type	Fall Dates	Winter Dates	Spring Dates
NWEA	September 16, 17, 18, 2025 (Makeup Day - September 19, 2025)	January 13, 14, 15, 2026 (Makeup Day - January 16, 2026)	May 5, 6, 7, 2026 (Makeup Day - May 8, 2026)
MEA (ELA & Math)	October 6-17, 2025	NA	April 6-17, 2026
MEA (Science)	NA	NA	April 6-17, 2026 (HS) May 11-22, 2026 (8 th Grade)
ACCUPLACER	September 16, 17, 18, 2025, with makeup days scheduled throughout the year	Ongoing	Ongoing
i-Ready Diagnostic	ALL 7th - 11th-grade students will complete math & Reading. August 25 - September 9, 2025, during Math & English classes, with makeups held during FOX Time and HelpDesk	January 13-15, 2026 (For mid-year enrollees only)	May 26-29, 2026, during Math & English classes, with makeups held during FOX Time and HelpDesk